

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 EURE-00 DPW-01 IO-12 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01

PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 INRE-00 RSR-01 CU-04 OMB-01 /117 W
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P R 111626 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4426

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 05322

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW, VS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT THIEU' S VISIT TO BONN

SUMMARY: HEINEMANN/ THIEU MEETING TOOK PLACE IN
" CORRECT" ATMOSPHERE, AND FOCUSED ON QUESTION OF
" POLITICAL PRISONERS" IN SOUTH VIETNAM. THIEU VISIT
CAUSED NUMEROUS DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRG, INCLUDING
BATTLES WITH BONN POLICE AND EXTENSIVE DAMAGE TO
INTERIOR OF BONN RATHAUS. END SUMMARY.

1. FONOFF SOUTHEAST ASIA DEPT DIRECTOR BERENDONCK
BRIEFED EMBOFF ON PRESIDENT THIEU' S APRIL 10 AFTERNOON
VISIT TO BONN. THIEU ARRIVED AT 1450 HOURS AT THE
COLOGNE- BONN AIRPORT WHERE HE WAS GREETED BY FONOFF
STATE SECRETARY FRANK AND AN HONOR GUARD, TAKEN TO
CHANCELLOR' S BUNGALOW TO FRESHEN UP, AND THEN TO
PRESIDENT HEINEMANN' S RESIDENCE, THE VILLA HAMMERSCHMIDT.
FOR SECURITY REASONS, THIEU' S PLANE LANDED AT THE
MILITARY SIDE OF THE AIRPORT, NO PRESS REPRESENTATIVES
WERE ALLOWED THERE AND HE WAS HELICOPTERED BACK AND
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FORTH BETWEEN AIRPORT AND BONN. ASIDE FROM HIS MEETING WITH HEINEMANN, THIEU OTHERWISE HAD ONLY A TWENTY MINUTE MEETING WITH SOME FIFTY TO ONE HUNDRED SOUTH VIETNAMESE STUDENTS ASSEMBLED FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE FRG AND SWITZERLAND.

2. BERENDONCK SAID THIEU' S FIFTY MINUTE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT HEINEMANN TOOK PLACE IN A " CORRECT" ATMOSPHERE; (THE PRESS HAD QUOTED HEINEMANN' S OFFICE AS TERMING THE ATMOSPHERE " COOL AND BUSINESSLIKE").

3. THIEU BEGAN THE MEETING WITH HEINEMANN BY EXPRESSING HIS THANKS FOR THE HUMANITARIAN AID GIVEN SO FAR BY THE FRG AND THE GERMAN PEOPLE, ADDING THAT THE GVN HOPED THE FRG COULD OFFER FURTHER HELP AND SUPPORT IN THE FUTURE. ACCORDING TO BERENDONCK, HEINEMANN REPLIED THAT THE GERMANS ALSO HOPED TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE FURTHER ASSISTANCE BUT THAT TO DO SO, " WE NEED YOU TO HELP US HELP YOU". REFERRING TO THE PROTESTS IN THE FRG AGAINST THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PRESIDENT' S VISIT, HEINEMANN SAID IT WAS ABOVE ALL IMPORTANT THAT THE STATUS OF CIVILIAN PRISONERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM BE CLARIFIED. THIEU REPLIED THAT THE ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING 200,000 PRISONERS WERE " VERY EXAGGERATED". HE SAID THERE ARE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM, BUT ONLY CIVILIAN PRISONERS WHOME HE CLASSIFIED AS THOSE CONVICTED FOR CRIMES IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS COUNTRY' S LAWS, AND COMMUNISTS. THIEU ALSO REFERRED TO NUMEROUS POLITICAL PRISONERS BEING HELD BY THE VIET CONG. HEINEMANN SAID IT MIGHT BE USEFUL IF A NEUTRAL COMMISSION COULD INVESTIGATE THE SITUATION OF PRISONERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM IN ORDER TO CLARIFY THINGS. HEINEMANN SAID SUCH AN INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION OF THIEU' S POSITION COULD REBUT CONTRARY ALLEGATIONS.

4. AS SOME OF OUR CONSTITUENT POSTS HAVE REPORTED, THIEU' S VISIT HAS ATTRACTED SOME DEMONSTRATIONS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE FRG. ABOUT THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE DEMONSTRATED AGAINST THE VISIT IN DOWNTOWN BONN APRIL 10, DEMONSTRATORS OCCUPIED THE RATHAUS FOR SOME TIME, PORTIONS OF THE RESTORED INTERNAL SECTIONS OF THE RATHAUS WERE " DEVASTATED", AND SOME THIRTY- FIVE POLICEMEN AS WELL AS MANY DEMONSTRATORS WERE INJURED
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IN FIGHTING IN WHICH DEMONSTRATORS HURLED

COBBLESTONES AT POLICE. BERENDONCK TOLD EMBOFF HE
CONSIDERED THE ATTACK ON THE RATHAUS TO BE " PURE,
OUTRAGEOUS VANDALISM" AND THAT THE OVERALL PURPOSE OF
THE DEMONSTRATIONS WAS TO ONDERMINE THE POLITICAL
PRESTIGE OF PRESIDENT THIEO AND THUS TO SUPPORT THROUGH
POLITICAL MEANS THOSE GOALS WHICH NORTH VIETNAM AND
THE VIET CONG HAD BEEN UNABLE TO OBTAIN ON THE
VIETNAMESE BATTLEFIELD. (FYI WE ARE REPORTING IN
SEPTEL CHANCELLOR BRANDT' S CONDEMNATION OF THE
DEMONSTRATION IN BONN WHICH HE INCLODED IN HIS
ADDRESS TO THE SPD NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS ON APRIL 11-)
HILLENBRAND

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